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PLUMB PUDDING

FOR THE

HUMANE, CHASTE, VALIANT, ENLIGHTENE

PETER PORCUPINE.

BY HIS OBLIGED FRIEND,

MATHEW CAREY.

THE SECOND EDITION.

"His hand will be against every man—and every man's hand against him."
Gen. xvi. 12.

If "Blessed are the peace-makers"—accursed be Porcupine, the apostle of blood.

"Hated by knaves, and knaves to hate,

"Be this my motto—this my fate."



PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.

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FEDERALISM OF PETER PORCUPINE.

Personally appeared before me, the subscriber, one of the justices of the peace for the county of Philadelphia, John Pearce, of the city of Philadelphia, who being duly sworn, deposeth and saith, that in conversation some time ago with William Cobbett, the editor of Porcupine's Gazette, on the subject of the depredations committed on the American commerce by the vessels of the French republic, this deponent, in reply to William Cobbett's remarks, observed, that the British were also capturing American vessels. "Damn them (the Americans), said William Cobbett, no curse bad enough can happen to them, for their infamous declaration of independence; but I hope soon to see the two countries united together again." On this declaration, the deponent remarked, that as he (the deponent) had taken an oath of allegiance and had sworn to support the independence of the United States, he, William Cobbett, must expect that such expressions would be hurtful to the deponent's feelings. On which William Cobbett damned this deponent for an English rebel. Witness his hand, this 3d day of July, 1798.

JOHN PEARCE.

Sworn before me
JACOB SERVOS (Seal).



P R E F A C E.

Before you enter on the body of this pamphlet, reader, I request you to observe, that I do not deprecate your criticism respecting the execution of it. On that you may pass such sentence as pleases you.

That it is extremely imperfect, I acknowledge—and so, necessarily, must every work be, written in such haste, and under so many interruptions as I have experienced in this. That it has not cost me more than forty-eight hours application, is a fact, of which I give you the most solemn assurance.

But there are two circumstances which I wish you to bear in mind, during the perusal. One is, that against such a fiend as Cobbett, alone, would I write in such a style. My maxim on this subject is, that to hope to overcome a blackguard, you must fight him with his own weapons. This maxim I have long held—and it does not appear probable, that I shall ever renounce it. If any one denies the justice of it, and, through affected delicacy, reprobates the language I have used, I wish him no other punishment, than to be assailed by a ruffian, with a cart-full of brickbats, and to have nothing but a small sword to defend himself with. No small sword for me! I shall give brick bat for brick bat, to Cobbett, and every such scoundrel as may drive me into the field. When I enter the lists with a gentleman, he and the public shall find I know how to treat him as such.

The other circumstance, which I wish impressed on your mind, is, that it was hardly possible to make greater or more sincere exertions* than I have used to avoid the present appeal. I could not, a priori, have supposed I would have so long borne with the abuse of such a vulgar, upstart, impudent, rancorous villain.

If you pay due attention to these circumstances, in every other respect I cheerfully resign myself into your hands, perfectly indifferent what may be the fate of the PLUMB PUDDING—whether you decree it to the fire after perusal, or give the little stranger a cordial welcome into your library, and there assign it a permanent station.

January 16, 1799.

* It is not wonderful that I exerted myself to avoid an open rupture with Cobbett. A former controversy had well nigh cost me my life—and actually deprived me for fifteen months of the use of one of my limbs.

DEDICATION.

TO WILLIAM COBBETT;

HOW proud must you feel to have arrived at the honour of having a book dedicated to you! You will surely add a new feather to the Egotist's Cap, whose nodding plumes adorn your head, and write home again to your father to acquaint him with the further distinction to which you have arrived.*

It is true, the stile of this dedication is somewhat uncommon. I have not bestowed quite so much incense upon you, as some other dedicators. But the novelty of it ought to recommend it sufficiently to a man of your understanding.

"Out upon you, beggarly varlet!" you proclaim a feast—invite a number of hungry guests, and after they sit down to table, you throw them "*A Bone to gnaw.*" When they complain of your scanty fare, you give them "*A Kick*" on the shins. This, even from a Porcupine, is harsh treatment.

Not so do I serve you. Behold, with true Irish hospitality, I set before you a plentiful dish—and a favourite one in your own country. The stores whence it has been drawn, are abundantly sufficient to furnish you with entertainment for a long time. The continuance of the feast depends on yourself and friend, mr. "*Mania Reformatio.*" You and he may be convinced, that I do not mean either of the persons alluded to in my letter of the 22d December.

In this pamphlet I have proceeded upon the ground of your being the writer of the ribaldry you publish. You, and mr. Mania, and I, know better. I have penetrated the thin disguise under which he covered himself. And if you drive me to it, I swear by your ugly self, I shall drag him forward, covered with disgrace and dishonour. His —, and his —, and his —, shall shine forth in pamphlets and caricatures, till his existence shall become a burden.

MATHEW CAREY.

A

PLUMB PUDDING

FOR

PETER PORCUPINE.

C H A P. I.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

IT has been my fortune to address my fellow citizens, more frequently than could possibly have been acceptable to them—certainly much more so than has been agreeable to me. Few men have a stronger aversion to a wanton obtrusion of private cares or controversies on the public, of whom each individual has enough of his own affairs to occupy his attention.—Unless there are strong reasons to justify such appeals, they are vain and impertinent. But I conceive when a public attack is made on an individual, he has a right, and in most cases ought to exercise that right, to insist on a candid hearing, and a decision according to the evidence he brings forward. The present case, I humbly conceive to be one of this kind.

Peace and retirement I prize, and have fought most earnestly, as I think will be freely allowed by any one who has patience to peruse these pages. I have frequently made large sacrifices to secure them. But highly as I value them, I despise paying so

high a price for them as a dishonourable submission to any blackguard or ruffian that may assail me with his tongue, his pen, his cudgel, or his fist. While God preserves my life, I shall defend myself against every attack, in such mode and by such means, as the nature of the grievance, the character of the aggressor, or other circumstances of the case may require.

Some fastidious or prejudiced readers, before they proceed thus far, will probably exclaim,—“ Who is this Carey?—what is he?—why obtrude his complaints on the public, for the scurrility and abuse of a wretch, who has, with the utmost impunity, abused many of the most exalted characters in the country, and who seems privileged to dart his arrows around, at friend or foe, without a possibility of redress? Why should an obscure individual, like Carey, whom hardly any body knows out of his own district, affect such a keen sensibility respecting outrages, to which men so far his superiors in wealth, influence and rank, are obliged to submit?”

Another class of readers will say, as I have been told an hundred times, “ Cobbett is a wretch so far sunk in infamy, so detested, despised, and abhorred, by all those whose good opinion can reflect honour, that it is madness and folly to enter the lists with him. His abuse is regarded by none. What is to be gained in a controversy with a scoundrel, whom no lie, ever so barefaced, can shame; who has taken out his diploma by the unanimous vote of the college of blackguards; and who circulates two thousand papers daily, to people whom he calls his subscribers, but of whom many have in vain tried every means to have their names effaced from that register of disgrace, his subscription list.”

To the first class of objectors I shall briefly answer, if the most exalted characters choose to submit to the insolence of a low-bred, cowardly alien, whose unparalleled effrontery has induced him frequently to glory in scorning to become a citizen of that country in whose affairs he so arrogantly dares to interfere, and on which his blackguardism entails such disgrace—I feel no disposition to imitate a conduct, which I have always regarded as highly reprehensible and pernicious. If they do not nail his forfeit ears to the pillory of his own counter, give him a new taste of the cat-o-nine-tails, gently admonish him with a good cow-skin, have him dragged through the kennels, or, at least, apply for redress to those laws to which he offers daily outrage, they are, I contend, deficient in their duty to themselves and their country. Had any of those with whom the miscreant began, dragged him forward to public and condign punishment, the world would not have been lost in astonishment whether to ascribe the indulgence the ruffian has met with to the patience or pusillanimity of the United States—to the
highest

highest degree of magnanimity or to the opposite extreme. Certain it is, that there is not a parallel instance to be found in the records of any nation, of an alien suffered to assume a more dictatorial air than the first magistrate of the country; for I assert, without the smallest fear of contradiction, that this reptile dictates to the government in a style infinitely more authoritative than that of either the last or present president of the United States. More of this anon.

What! shall it be regarded as a public duty, to hunt out and bring to justice an incendiary who puts a torch to my house—or a petty villain who stops me on the highway, and robs me of a few dollars, to protract a wretched existence, perhaps to save a sick wife and helpless children from starvation—and by what logic can it be proved to be otherwise than criminal, to pass over the diurnal attacks of an unprincipled rascal, who hardly prints a single paper void of the vilest abuse and scurrility? Certainly if Shakespeare wrote correctly, and that he did, no man will deny, when he declared, that

- “ Good name, in man or woman,
 “ Is the immediate jewel of their souls :
 “ Who steals my purse, steals trash ; 'tis something, nothing :
 “ 'Twas mine—'tis his—and has been slave to thousands ;
 “ But he that filches from me my good name,
 “ Robs me of that, which not enriches him,
 “ And makes me poor indeed :”

there is an incalculable difference between the villany of such a miscreant as Cobbett, and that of hundreds who have forfeited their lives to the sanguinary penal codes of Europe, or who are by the mild American system devoted to beating of hemp and sawing of marble. If these positions be true, and that they are, every man of rectitude will agree, it must be the incumbent duty of all good citizens to use their endeavours to erect some mound to oppose that overwhelming torrent of malignity, defamation and blackguardism, that threatens to destroy all distinction between right and wrong, and to involve in one indiscriminate mass the upright and scoundrelly part of the community.

To the other class of objectors I reply, that no man living entertains a more contemptible opinion of Cobbett than I do. To say that he is a disgrace to human nature, as has been already said, is a very faint expression of my idea. I can safely declare, and appeal to Heaven for the truth of the assertion, that of all the villains that ever possessed a printing press, I never knew or ever

heard of more than one or two that could in any degree be compared to him. I have considered his conduct and character with attention, and I have not been able to discover the appearance of more than one good quality in him—and that is, a certain kind of candour (perhaps I should rather say, impudence), which makes him scorn to mask the atrocity and villany of his views.

However, base and contemptible as he indubitably is, were he infinitely more so—but heaven knows that is impossible—I never could agree with those who assert that his attacks are altogether unworthy of notice. A man who circulates two thousand papers daily, may impair the reputation and respectability of the most excellent of the sons of men. It is a trite observation, but too much a-propos to be omitted here, that incessant dropping of water will wear away the hardest stone. In like manner, incessant, unrepelled scurrility, buffoonery, and detraction, such as Cobbett uses, must insensibly wear away the hard-earned fame of the best spent life. If he has readers, they cannot resist the impression, whether or not, to borrow one of his own elegant figures, they pay for his “dirty dish clout.”

These considerations inspired me with an abhorrence of any warfare with the miscreant. That I used many and sincere efforts to avoid it, will appear in the sequel, to the satisfaction of his warmest friends and partisans, if he has any left. But let no man do me the injustice to suppose I feared it. I knew the scoundrel too well. I either grossly undervalue Cobbett, or overrate myself, if I am not able to meet him on any ground whatever. Divest his ribald writings of their falsehoods and Billingsgate, and you rob them of life and soul—you leave behind but a wretched caput mortuum, that would lull a Cerberus to sleep. The abusive language he uses, such as rascal, scoundrel, blackguard and ruffian, can be easily acquired. I think before the fellow has proceeded thus far, he will freely allow, that although I have newly opened store, and have not received my supplies from a camp or the purlieu of St. Giles’s, my stock is, nevertheless, as copious and inexhaustible as his own. I have taken him for my model, and pride myself on being a rapid proficient: and expect to make much greater progress. As to the boasted circulation of his paper, if I am driven, by a continuance of his teasing abuse, to establish one, which appears at present not improbable, I pledge myself to use such industry in the circulation of it, as to make it, within half a year, at least co-extensive with Porcupine’s Gazette. If I am provoked to take this step, may Otway’s whole collection of curses, “Pride, poverty, shame, and the name of villain,” light on me, if I ever quit my grapple of him, till I render his infamy co-equal with his guilt, and make him

him curse the hour in which he assailed a man who never offered him provocation. Before two months from this date, the 7th of January, 1799, I pledge myself to forfeit five hundred dollars, if he does not confess that I am a tolerable adept in the art of dispersing pamphlets. This shall be read in every city, town, village, and hamlet, in the United States, to which there is a conveyance by stage, by mail, by waggon, or by cart.

C H A P. II.

Publication of Porcupine's Life. His claim to the title of Liar established. M. Carey's letter to him. Answer. Second letter. Insolent reply.

TO enable the reader to understand the nature of the controversy in which I find myself engaged, with the most execrable wretch that heaven in its wrath ever allowed to infest a country, and arm citizen against citizen, it is necessary for me to ascend to the publication of what the miscreant calls his *Life*, in other words, the romance which he published under the pompous title of "*The Life and Adventures of Peter Porcupine, with a full and fair Account of his authoring Transactions.*" In pp. 36, 7, he has the following paragraph—

"I addressed myself to Mr. Carey. This was, to make use of a culinary figure, jumping out of the frying-pan into the fire. Mr. Carey received me as booksellers generally receive authors (I mean authors whom they hope to get but little by): he looked at the title from top to bottom, and then at me from head to foot.—"No, *my lad*," says he, "I don't think it will suit."—*My lad!*—God in heaven forgive me! I believe that, at that moment, I wished for another yellow fever to strike the city; not to destroy the inhabitants, but to furnish me too with *the subject of a pamphlet*, that might make me rich.—Mr. Carey has sold hundreds of the *Observations* since that time, and therefore, I dare say he highly approved of them, when he came to a perusal. At any rate I must not forget to say, that he behaved honourably in the business; for, he

"promised

"promised not to make known the author, and he certainly kept his word, or the discovery would not have been reserved for the month of June, 1796. This circumstance, considering Mr. Carey's politics, is greatly to his honour, and has almost wiped from my memory that contumelious "*my lad*."

It is almost irrelevant to the subject of this pamphlet, but I must be pardoned for observing, that this very minute detail is a tissue of falsehood, from beginning to end, except that the pamphlet in question was offered me to print, and refused. I read only the title-page. It was scurrilous. I concluded the contents to be of the same complexion, and refused to be the publisher. But if ever I could depend on my memory, in any transaction in the whole course of my life, Cobbett did not appear with the manuscript. It was brought me by a child. It follows, that all the very high degree of merit ascribed to me, for so honourably keeping the secret, was one of Cobbett's waking dreams.

Some explanation is here necessary. A few weeks after I had refused to print the pamphlet, it was advertised by Mr. Bradford, and became a frequent subject of conversation. I recollected the title, and endeavoured also to recollect the bearer. As the transaction had made a very slight impression on my mind, I found it not easy at first to ascertain the person. But the result of my endeavours was a conviction that it had been a child. And I am now ready to swear, if necessary, that to the best of my knowledge, judgment, belief, and recollection, the "*Modern Tartuffe*," as it was originally styled, was not offered to me by William Cobbett, but by a child, apparently about twelve or thirteen years of age. I knew not the wretched, rascally writer. I never saw him, to my knowledge, till he called at my store in January 1797, to purchase a map, to pay for which he had not money in his pocket; and on telling me he would send it, I asked his name—He said, William Cobbett. I gazed at him—and the moment he went out of the door, called my family to look after him, as I should have done at a leopard, an elephant, or any other strange animal. Those who know him, will judge whether a man who has once seen his carotty head and Draw-canfir face, could ever forget him.

Of the Grub-street production, a worthy harbinger of the future labours of his "*muddy brain*," the scribbler says, I "*fold hundreds*." To what numberless detections and what disgraces will a liar expose himself! Referring to the account current of Mr. Bradford, from whom alone they were to be had, I find I sold sixty copies; neither more nor less. Those who may doubt whether Cobbett would so palpably run the risque of
being

being caught in a useless and barefaced falsehood, may satisfy themselves by applying to Mr. Bradford's books; the entries will be found as follow :—

1794. August 23, — 36 Observations.

1795. Feb. 7, — 6 Ditto.

12, — 6 Ditto.

21, — 12 Ditto.

Let it be not said, that he would not tell a lie in so plain a case, and to answer no conceivable purpose. Inveterate habits are not to be overcome. A liar must and will tell lies—if they only keep him in practice, 'tis well—if any point is to be gained by it, so much the better.

The success of his anonymous publications induced him to creep forth from his den, and rush into the glare of day, which he had shunned with as much solicitude as the midnight robber or assassin.—In June 1796, he avowed himself, took a store, and openly set those whom he had injured, at defiance. He was immediately attacked by a host of anonymous writers, who seemed determined to embroil him and me in a quarrel.—They assumed it as a fact, that fear was the sole reason why he had made such honourable mention of me. It was their wish to oblige Cobbett to abuse me, in order to evince that he was not a coward. I confess I did not deem it very kind of those gentlemen, whoever they were, to place such a foul-mouthed scoundrel in so very unpleasant a dilemma. I felt on the occasion as a man would with a good suit of clothes on, if he perceived an outrageous scavenger with a cart full of filth, and a shovel, dealing it forth on every side—Cobbett was the scavenger. I wished sincerely to avoid his shovel. I knew that the brush of public enquiry would rub out the stains. But I did not wish to put them or myself to the necessity of using that brush. I was satisfied with the station I held in the estimation of my fellow citizens. I had lived twelve years among them, and had never soiled my hands or my character by any of the various schemes or speculations that have produced such fraud, disgrace and ruin. I had, during the whole period, pursued with unremitting industry a useful and honourable business. For six years of the time, under an extreme degree of difficulty and embarrassment, I had carried on the American Museum, a work to which enlightened foreigners and citizens of equal respectability had been so partial as to declare that it reflected honour on the country which afforded its editor an asylum. During the remainder of the time, I had printed a number of works equally valuable*—and
done

* The proceeds of two of these works alone were above 60,000 dollars. Of Guthrie's Geography I printed 2500, and of Goldsmith's Animated

done business to the amount of 300,000 dollars, with men of various nations and parties—and among the whole there was not one of real respectability of character from whom, if need were, I could not procure the most flattering testimonials. I had frequently given employment, for months together, to at least one hundred and fifty persons, in the various departments of paper-making, printing, engraving, binding, &c. &c. and I can with pride and pleasure declare, that I cannot at this moment recollect the name of one decent, deserving person, whom I ever employed, that would not gladly work for me again. I had a large and growing family to maintain—and was engaged in an extensive business which demanded my whole time and most unceasing attention. I had not therefore time to squander on appeals, explanations, rejoinders and replies. All these reasons, and numerous others, combined to render me anxious to escape Cobbett's abuse, which I thus early resolved to take every prudent measure to avert. But should it prove unavoidable, I as early resolved to carry on the war with all the powers which God and nature, education and observation had bestowed on me. From this determination I have not swerved one moment since that period, and to it is owing the present publication.

I hope no part of the preceding paragraph will be ascribed to vanity or egotism. Both I heartily despise. But there are certain occasions, and the present I believe is one of them, in which it is allowable for a man to urge what he can fairly advance in his own defence.

My solicitude was considerably augmented by a report spread with some industry, that I was the writer of one of the pamphlets against Cobbett. I therefore sent him a letter, of which the following is a copy :

“ SEPTEMBER 6, 1796.

“ SIR,

“ I regret exceedingly the introduction of my name into your Life ; not that I have any reason to complain of the manner in which it is done ; for, without any affectation of modesty, I think the compliments paid me are rather greater than I deserve.

“ My regret arises from the occasion it has since given to no less than four writers to couple our names together—and apparently with a view to lead to a literary warfare between us.

mated Nature, 3000. The former sells for sixteen and the latter for nine dollars. At this rate they would produce 67,000 dollars ; but as part of them were disposed of to subscribers, at a lower price, I take the above round sum.

“ I feel

" I feel no hesitation about declaring, that this would, for various reasons, be to me highly disagreeable. My wish is to live peaceably; therefore I am desirous to avoid controversies of every kind. My business demands my whole attention; therefore I want the leisure such an irksome affair would require: and moreover, every prudent man would sedulously seek to avoid, while it could be avoided without dishonour, the probable issue of a controversy carried on, as, I believe, ours would be.

" For these, and other reasons, I am induced to take this step, as a precautionary measure; according to the old adage, ' an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.'

" I therefore inform you, that I have never written or published a line or sentence respecting you; and that it is my determination to pursue the same line of conduct, unless (which I hope will not be the case) I am driven to a different course by unprovoked aggression.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

MATHEW CAREY.

Mr. WILLIAM COBBETT."

To this letter I received the following very smooth and sycophantic reply; which led me to hope I should escape the black-guard's abuse.

PHILAD. 7 Sept. 1796.

Sir,

" Hurry has prevented me from answering your polite note sooner. Be assured, that you cannot have a greater aversion to a paper war than I have, or a greater contempt for the miserable wretches who have manifested the malicious desire of involving us in one. It is my sincere desire to live in peace with all the booksellers—and towards none does this desire direct itself* than towards Mr. Carey.

I am your most humble & obt. servt.

W. COBBETT.

Mr. M. CAREY."

* The sorry scribbler could not write a note of seven lines without a gross grammatical error; yet he pretends to criticise on the term "*lengthy*," which, because he cannot find it in his dictionary, he calls a new-coined word. By the same rule, he might say that mahogany, piquet-guard, derange, and a hundred other words, used by the best English writers, belong not to the language, because forgotten by lexicographers. *Lengthy* has been in use for half a century among

C

writers,

But James Carey (my brother) and John Markland having established a newspaper, and my brother having opened a formidable battery upon Cobbett, on Friday the 5th of May 1797, he had in his paper, the following effusion of impudence and malignity:

"The O'Careys, on the contrary, are guilty of every meanness that interested servility can invent. The other evening they asserted that I must be paid by Britain, because my gazette and Cenfor were so cheap; when no longer ago than yesterday, their mumper, in order to prevail on a person to quit my paper for theirs, told him that theirs was much cheaper." His view was, by involving me in the abuse, to impose silence on my brother. Here it is proper for me to observe, that I never had the smallest right, title, or interest in or to that paper, nor the United States Recorder, published subsequently by my brother. Except the account of the catastrophe of Mr. Brown and his family, and my own advertisements, I solemnly declare I never wrote fifty lines for either.

Adhering to my plan already stated, I determined once more to address the scavenger; for I had no more relish for, nor disposition to submit to, his filth in company, and with the gratuitous prefix of a great O, than quite solus. On the contrary, I considered the insult as aggravated by the baseness and subterfuge palpable on the face of it. It was intended to abuse me so as not to escape the notice of the most superficial and ignorant, and to leave a sort of back-door to creep out from any personal attack, or from the penalties of the law against libellers. On Saturday morning, about ten o'clock, I sent him the following letter:

May 6, 1797.

Mr. COBBETT,

"I am concerned to find that you appear disposed to force me into a paper warfare with you, whether I will or no. This does not correspond with the declaration in your billet of September 7, '96—'It is my sincere desire to live in peace with all the bookfellers—and towards none does this desire direct itself than towards Mr. Carey.'

writers, whose names would be disgraced to have a Cobbett's near them. Such a wretch to have been a schoolmaster! His scholars ought to have seized the ferula, and driven him out of a school which he dishonoured by his ignorance. I have begun the examination of his works—and although I have not read more than a fourth part of the two volumes, I have marked above one hundred errors against the most fundamental rules of grammar.

"The

- " The inference, that such is your disposition, I draw from the expression of the ' O'Careys,' in your paper of last evening.
- " That this was intended to implicate me, *may be* a mistake. I hope, but hardly suppose, it is. But that a majority of your readers *will* implicate me, I feel persuaded.
- " The aversion I formerly expressed to this warfare, has not diminished. On the contrary, it is stronger than ever. I therefore make this one more effort to avoid it. Should we be engaged in it, I am determined to be able to exculpate myself from its consequences, whatever they may be.
- " I have merited no ill treatment at your hands, except for the sin of differing from you, *toto celo*, in political opinions. I have done you no injury. In the account of your Life, you professed your gratitude towards me ; what has cancelled this debt ?
- " I have, you must acknowledge, taken no common pains to escape a contest with you. To me it would be irksome, as can well be conceived. For if you slander and abuse me, what am I to do ? Very unfortunately, in bodily strength I am far your inferior. Were I, as, in my humble opinion, every man ought in such a case, to attempt to procure redress by the cudgel, for the injuries of the pen, it is more than probable I should only meet with an aggravation of the injury. But it is no reason because I am weaker than you, that I am therefore to be subject to your unprovoked attacks.
- " Shall I return slander for slander, abuse for abuse ? In this line I am unpractised. I despise a recurrence to these weapons. Besides, the utmost of my ingenuity could devise nothing to add to what has been written against you ineffectually. I scorn to borrow scurrility from any man. I hope there is no vanity in the declaration, that in fair, open, gentlemanly controversy, there lives not a man from whom I should shrink—but abuse I have never employed; and never shall willingly.
- " Should I sue you for damages ?—Poor satisfaction to be derived from dancing attendance in courts, to have perhaps a few hundred dollars damages decreed, after an expence of time worth probably double the amount !
- " What other alternative remains ? You fight no duels. In this latter mode, the inequality arising from a disparity of strength and size, and from my lameness, is done away. But to this *ultima ratio* there are strong objections. Arms have been your trade for years : I have never drawn but two triggers in my life. Here, therefore, the inequality returns, though not in so great a degree. But this is not my only objection. I have a wife and four small children to support. On my industry they depend. I owe it to them to incur no honourably-avoidable

risque : this motive, and a decent regard for the laws of the state, induce me to take every step that can be taken with propriety, to avert a commencement of hostilities. But powerful as these motives are, and powerful they must surely be allowed, no man shall abuse or insult me with impunity.

" I once more, sir, in the same spirit as dictated my former letter, declare, that I have never written or published a line or sentence against you. I have long done writing on politics. I have no concern in nor control over the Daily Advertiser ; and cannot, therefore, be responsible for its contents. In fact, although I regard it as extremely well conducted in general, yet articles have appeared in it, which I disapprove as much as any thing that has ever appeared in your paper.

" I should be extremely sorry to have this letter ascribed, on the one hand, to a desire of intimidating you, or, on the other, to any fear of you. They are both equally remote from my heart. My wish is peace. I have done nothing to provoke hostility. As long as in my power, I shall avoid it—when it comes, I shall know how to meet it.

" This letter, like my former, is intended for your own perusal. The other, contrary to my wishes, was divulged. Some anonymous miscreant scoundrel, whom perhaps I may discover and repay, stated it to be a deprecation of your wrath, for injuries I had offered. Heaven and hell are not more opposed to each other, than this idea is to truth.

MATHEW CAREY."

In this letter I studied to steer a middle course between the appearance of apprehension on the one hand, and of threatening on the other. How far I succeeded, the reader must decide. I was prepared for peace or war—but infinitely more desirous of the former than the latter. I still hoped, notwithstanding the notorious baseness of the miscreant, that as there was little to be gained by attacking me, and as he soared to such higher game, I might escape. But I had utterly mistaken Cobbett. I had drawn my inferences from the generality of mankind—not considering, that the Porcupine was a sort of *lusus naturæ*, a *sui generis* hurled into existence to belie all general rules. Accordingly, after forty-five hours study, I received on Monday morning, (though dated on Saturday) the following reply, which such an insolent rascal as Cobbett alone could have penned, and such a brutal ruffian as Cobbett could have sent.

PHILADELPHIA, 6 MAY, 1797.

MATHEW CAREY,

" I have received yours of this date. This is, I think the third time
time

time that you have pestered me with your *hostile* professions of a desire to live in peace with me.—If your wishes are really pacific, your conduct is very unaccountable. To write me a letter declaring your opposition to my politics, and also *your disapprobation of my paper*; such an unasked for, uncalled for, impertinent interference in the business of another man, must certainly be the Irish method of avoiding a paper war. I feel, however, little inclination to be angry with you on this account: for, to hear my Gazette disapproved of by one, whose mode of conducting a public paper *obliged him to escape from his own country*, and who has, in his asylum, *attempted a like establishment in vain*, is a strong testimony of its merit and a pretty certain omen of its success.

“ Jesuitical as your letter is, I clearly see its intent, and shall most assuredly defeat it.—The “O’Careys” I shall make use of just as often as I see occasion for it; and you have my free liberty to extend its meaning as far as you please.—The effects of your resentment I most heartily despise.

“ If you have, as you say, a wife and four small children, who depend solely on your industry for support, I imagine your time might be much more profitably employed than in writing long and insipid letters. At any rate, if you must write, let me beg of you to write to somebody else; for, if I am teased with any more of your epistles, I shall very probably, by way of compensation for the trouble of reading them, send them to fill up a spare corner for the diversion of the readers of Porcupine’s Gazette.

WM. COBBETT.

In the name of all the witches in Macbeth, and every thing else that’s wonderful, how is it possible for a man to earn a handsome souling in a horsepond, or a tossing in a blanket, if this letter did not deserve such a recompence?—The impudent rascal abuses me in his paper in such plain terms that “he that runs may read,” and when I mildly remonstrate, he calls my application, “*an unasked for, uncalled for, impertinent interference*” in his business! Could any thing from Cobbett excite wonder or astonishment, this undoubtedly would.

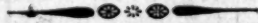
The ruffian says “This is the third time I have been pestered with your hostile professions of a desire to live in peace with me.” I had a few minutes’ conversation with him in his own store at one time, and wrote him the two preceding letters.—They are now fairly before the reader. Let him determine whether they are ‘impertinent or uncalled for,’ or whether they could have arisen from any motive but a desire of peace. Indeed Cobbett, in this instance, as in so many others, proves himself a liar.

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The first letter he was pleased himself to stile a "polite note." Yet now, with his usual consistency and decency, it becomes a "hostile" one. The second letter is unquestionably penned in a much stronger style. But if the insolent expressions above quoted from his paper of the 5th of May, did not justify the contents of that letter, then it must certainly arise from something sacred in the person or character of Cobbett, that gives him a privilege beyond any other person in the community.

Other people may discern this sacredness of person in the blackguard. I never could. I am content to place all my hopes of esteem, regard, and support, on the issue of the question, whether, at least thus far, I had not right and justice on my side. Let the residue of our intercourse speak for itself.

The reader needs not be informed that for this time our correspondence closed here. To this effusion of a malignant heart, there was no reply but a cudgel--and very unfortunately, in the *argumentum baculinum*, I was not endowed with such eloquence as Cobbett: therefore how well soever he merited this persuasive sort of oratory, and notwithstanding my earnest desire to apply it over his shoulders, I was reluctantly obliged to resign him to other hands.



C H A P. III.

Law Suit. Liberty of the Press. Important Scheme, PRO BONO PUBLICO.

SOME time afterwards, there appeared in the Grub-street Gazette, a libel, calculated to injure me in my business. This was proper ground of action. I felt it therefore a duty incumbent on me, to bring the question fully and fairly before a court of justice, whether any vagabond, scoundrel, miscreant, or ruffian, who could raise one or two hundred dollars, to purchase a printing press and a few types, should, with his press and his types, likewise purchase the very important privilege of blackening the fair fame, disturbing the peace, or destroying the interests and prospects of any one whom he or such lurking assassins as he might employ, or as might employ him, should mark out as objects of their wrath, their malice, their envy, or for the alleviation of their poverty.

For it is to be observed, that as many men are defamed by unprincipled libellers, to keep beggary and starvation from the door, as from motives of wickedness.

Here let me beg the reader to make a solemn pause. Let him not be led astray by names. Let him ask himself, whether this is not the real question in all cases of this kind, so far as respects attacks on individuals in private life, and, let me add, on the private character of public men.—I prize, as inestimable, the liberty of the press—the liberty I mean, of fairly and boldly, but candidly and decently, discussing the public conduct of public men of all ranks, and likewise of all parties.—But the more invaluable is the liberty, the more detestable is the licentiousness of the press. So far are they, in fact, from being inseparably connected, as the scoundrels who live by the dishonourable trade of surreptitious pretend, that the exuberance of the one has a direct tendency to destroy the other. What would be thought, were a farmer to insist that it was necessary to cherish the tares and weeds that were choaking up the good grain, in order to promote the growth of that very grain? Surely that he was a fit candidate for a mad-house. His claim is equally strong, who advocates the licentiousness, for fear of impairing the liberty of the press.

The question thus brought before the courts of justice, is of importance to two large classes or descriptions of men—the good and the bad. The former, should there be no legal redress to be had, will find themselves, so far as respects this matter, reduced to a state of nature. They will therefore be under the necessity of associating for self protection, to supply the defects of the law. An association of this kind would awe into some regard for decency, cowardly bullies, such as Cobbett, who are encouraged to proceed in their villainous career by the impunity they experience through the contempt, fear, indolence or other mistaken motives of the persons whom they offer up as sacrifices.

That the bad are equally interested in the issue of this question, will admit of no doubt. Should the decision be in favour of the quill drivers, and printers, what a glorious field is opened for the exercise of talents hitherto lying concealed or buried in obscurity! What father, who has an athletic son, such as Cobbett, will be so unjust as to destine him to trundle a wheelbarrow, saw wood, or carry a hod for a bricklayer, when he can make so much more comfortable provision for him by procuring him a few types, a press, and enabling him to establish a blackguard newspaper? Instead of living and dying, as unkind fate would otherwise have obliged him, at the bottom of the wheel, he will rise, as the subject of this pamphlet has done, to the summit, enjoy all the good things of this world, be caressed by
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the great, and, in fine, may hope to dictate laws to a rising empire. 'Tis no objection to this idea, that the person has not the talents of a writer; there never will be wanting men whose cowardice equals their malignity, and who will be happy to have a ruffian to stand forward between them and the correction or punishment which their villainy deserves. There is no arguing against facts: and the most incredulous must coincide in opinion with me, when they consider what Cobbett has been, what he now is, and the wealth and influence he has acquired.



C H A P. IV.

Mr. John Ward Fenno. United Irishmen. Plots, Combinations, and Conspiracies. Explanation.

IT here becomes necessary to introduce on the stage another personage, who has been the means of involving me in the present dispute. This gentleman is Mr. John Ward Fenno, editor and proprietor of the *Gazette of the United States*. For many weeks he had terrified the public with reports of plots, combinations, and conspiracies, of United Irishmen. Those who read his paper might have been surprised at the supineness of the government of the United States, and their culpable neglect of the Cassandra's voice that warned them of the impending and tremendous danger.

This intrepid young man was not to be deterred from the performance of his duty by the inattention which his admonitions experienced. With truly Roman greatness of soul he issued the following public spirited and undaunted declaration, in his paper of the 26th November last:

"I have a list of members of the society—to this I shall always be happy to receive additions.—Facts, also, identifying the membership of any individual whatever, will be useful and necessary. When as complete as I can make it, the names of the whole of them shall be published, from the gloomy, close-working, cut-throat-looking son of Galen, to the *fatuitous and sputtering book-feller*, though the knives of the whole bloody gang were at my breast. Similar lists should be collected every where, and the villains dragged forth to light. For light to them is death."

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I read this paragraph, and was at a loss to ascertain who was the "*fatuitous sputtering bookfeller?*" Although I never had a very extraordinary opinion of my own talents, yet (pardon my vanity, reader) my modesty never went so far as to consign me to the class of *fatui*, or fools. I took the cap, tried it, thought it did not fit, and threw it among the rest of the Irish bookfellers, of whom there are four in this city. Had I suspected the fool's cap to be intended for me, I think it more than probable I should have saved Mr. Fenno some of the uneasiness which this affair has caused him, myself the trouble of writing, and the public that of wading through this pamphlet. But the fates otherwise decreed.

At length, after the expectations of the public had been raised to the highest pitch, when every body looked forward to see lists of hundreds of thousands of those Cannibals, the blood-thirsty United Irishmen, the mountain was heard to groan, and after many hard throes, the mouse crept out. This mouse, courteous reader, was a list of seventeen names, prefaced by the following observations, in the United States Gazette of Tuesday the 18th of December last.

"All ages and all forms of government, have abounded in conspiracies: and if these have sometimes produced beneficial results, they have never been derived from the calculations of the conspirators. But our own has been remarkably fertile in the production of conspiracies of the worst kind, carried on by the worst agents, and promoted by the worst of means—so that it may justly be called the *age of insurrection*; unhappily it must be added, they have of late experienced a too uniform success. Whether our country is to be immolated on this sanguinary altar, depends wholly on our timely and vigorous exertion. An exhibition of uncommon nerve can alone preserve us from uncommon evils; that conspiracy, once ripened and matured, our nerve and our energy will rivet stronger our chains.

"We have read of empires, assailed and overthrown by conspirators who sprang up like mushrooms in the night; fellows of yesterday, unknown, unthought of. But lest conviction be withheld from this evidence, let us turn from what we read, to what we have *seen*. We have seen the first empire in the world shattered to a mass of ruins, its forms destroyed, its institutions reversed, its language overrun with barbarous and jargonic terms, its manners debauched, its religion destroyed, its consequence annihilated, and its very name rendered a loathsome reproach; have we not seen them brought about by a set of men contemptible in their origin, character, and at first in number, and do we, after all this, imagine ourselves unaffailable to the United Irishmen? Think you, the victims of St. Bartholomew's day imagined, an hour before their fate, the terrible stroke which awaited them?

"While, in the emphatic language of the Roman orator, many

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are found exclaiming of each of these murderers, "*tamen hic vivit*," others, sunk in bestial slothfulness and inanity, cry, "What a fuss is making about the United Irishmen! Who are they, what are they, where are they?" Astonishing nonsense! amazing infatuation! Desperate, destructive, devoted stupidity! Because your enemy is secret, close, and unfathomable; because his designs are dark, and defy research, do you doubt their tendency and power to harm you? Believe me, these conspirators, while they are secret as the grave, will be found daring as death, when their plot ripens to explosion.

"What is an *United Irishman*? May not Irishmen unite as well as we? Look to Ireland for its character, and behold it written in *blood*! From the time of earl Strongbow, the Irish have borne a character, our conceptions of which it is hard to find words to do justice to. From being almost the sole depositaries of science, the mass has degenerated into the most brutal ignorance, whilst from that extremity of opposition in their character, which distinguishes them in a peculiar manner from all the rest of the world, their isle has contributed beyond her proportion, in men of eminence, as soldiers, poets, orators, statesmen and divines. An *Irish gentleman* is one of the finest characters in nature. The rest of the nation is represented by the bulk of those who come to this country—such men as Burke, Lyon, Reynolds, old Findley, Smiley and Duane, the bare mention of whom is sufficient, without the trouble of elucidation.

"Imagine a whole nation of such men as these, and figure to yourselves a congregation of every noxious, every venomous propensity.

"Behold their deeds, and behold deeds worthy such authors. *Wild*, and untameable, they wage incessant war with one another, and Ireland has been a Golgotha from the earliest period of history. But her bloody bands of *United Irishmen* have exceeded in the atrocity of their massacres even the horrors of the Druidical rites, and absolutely cut-throats, like Shakespeare's Hotspur, for *diversion*. Thus much for their character at home. This character has driven them thence. Are they then of a different cast here? No: *cælum non animum mutant*. By carnage and plunder they subsisted there: in massacre and ravage they can alone be happy here.

"*Nomenque erit indelebile vestrum.*"

"The various affiliated societies of United Irishmen in this country, form one intimate, closely connected band—the whole being only so many ramifications of the mother society, the superintending guidance of which they are directed, and with which they keep up a constant correspondence as well as with each other. Thus, it is evident, the gang in America is altogether subordinate to that of Ireland: Its views, it appears, are equally so.

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"The scheme, in its rude outline, is to bring on a revolutionary state in America, which, by disorganising all the plans of commerce and trade, might diminish the means of Great Britain for crushing the insurrection in Ireland. They had nevertheless marked the ramifications of a revolutionary form, which was to have been instituted in order the better to prolong those disorders which it was their first object to excite. They coalesced with the jacobins (most of the leaders of whom have actually been admitted within the pale of the society) so far as regarded the stalking-horse, behind the sanction of whose *philosophical* fame, all this mischief was to be brewed. He is the focus whence emanate all their deep-laid designs. He is now (though a *salary man*) absenting himself from that post which he fills and defiles, to forward the plans of his myrmidons by writing inflammatory resolutions against the alien and sedition bills, and stirring up the people to insurrection. This tall, awkward figure (I do not mean the noted *tory* and man of laurel) imagines, that under the semblance of philosophical retirement, he sufficiently cloaks those daring machinations, which will nevertheless drag him one day, a trembling criminal, to the bar of justice.—Imitating a certain foolish bird, he runs his head into Helvetius, and imagines himself concealed, because he does not see that he is seen.

"Having used this great man 'till their purposes had been sufficiently advanced, he would have been laid on the shelf, or perhaps decently interred. He would have given way to men of greater daring—stronger nerve—better qualified to sail on the "tempestuous sea of liberty." Reynolds would succeed to the directorship: for a Talleyrand, in body as well as mind, we need not look beyond his most impudent and meddling associate.

"To further these ends, every member, on initiation into the society, pays into the general fund 1 guinea, which contribution is annually continued, and increased by requisitions, as occasion calls.

"A permanent committee of correspondence has existed for three years with the executive directory of France, and another with the revolvers [in] Ireland. With both, constant intercourses and communication is maintained.

"Do I hear some one cry, "Name them!" "Name them!" Lend me your patience and I will. Doubt not that they exist—for they are identified by unquestionable evidence—that of an *United Irishman*! Who so doubts the existence of a directorial body, is a fool. Do you not see that they possess all the qualities of a body? do they not see? do they not read, do they not hear, do they not feel? or how is it that the fears we have excited have repressed their daring, and suspended their appeal to the populace? "*Consul vidit.*"

"Let not the inhabitants of other towns suppose, that they are free

free from the machinations of united Irishmen, because Philadelphia is the centre of their operations.

"In Baltimore there is a band called the "Republican company," composed to a man of united Irish men; these, with the whole numerous body there, voted for the muddy-headed general, that sworn enemy to France, that foe to her schemes, that "opposer of her power." Their uniform is completely French; and that thier principles are so, will be doubted by no man who knows the *real* character of their political leader.

"In short, their poison runs in every artery of our political body—it is diffused over all the minutest fibres of our frame. PUBLICITY to their machinations, is the attempted remedy. Here I stand in need of active co-operation. If other people do not choose to adopt my homely and untutored style, let them utter the facts I bring to light in their own dress, or any other—at all events give them publicity. They should have a dissemination as wide as the extent of the evil. It is answering but a partial purpose that I present them to the view of thirteen hundred people, when they should meet the eyes of thrice as many thousands.

LIST OF UNITED IRISHMEN.

"On this subject, it will be remembered, I requested communications. Those I have received being far from complete, it is almost useless to make a publication of them: Indeed why should I publish a dozen of names, when the members amount by their own estimation, to FORTY THOUSAND effective men?

"I say, why should I insert in my paper, the names of
 Samuel Wiley, *teacher in the college.*
 John Black, *ditto.*
 Thomas McAdam, *schoolmaster.*
 John O'Reiley, *ditto.*
 ——— Moffatt, *Zachary's Court.*
 Samuel Parks, *ditto, tavern keeper.*
 ——— Reynolds,
 Robert Brobston,
 ——— Duane, *alias Jasper Dwight.*
 Matthew Lyon, *of Vermont.*
 James Carey,
 Matthew ditto.
 Andrew Magill,
 James T. Callender,
 D. Clarke, *shoe-seller, in Market-street.*
 Lloyd, *of Newgate.*
 J. D. Burke, *late delegate from New-York.*

Or what end can it answer, but that of introducing discoveries, or at least attempts to extend our present stock of information, respecting the number of disaffected Irish in America?"

But it seems I was unacquainted with the extent of Mr. Fenno's kindness. He had destined the foolscap for my head, to keep it comfortably warm during the approaching winter. I here beg leave to present him my sincere acknowledgments, which I hope he will not modestly refuse to accept. Let me, however, incidentally observe, that I have known "*fatuitous*" printers—men who fancied themselves possessed of immense powers, but to whom the public, were it put to vote, would award the foolscap. Take notice, reader, I protest against any misconstruction of my meaning. I do not assert that Mr. John Ward Fenno, editor, proprietor, printer, and publisher of the Gazette of the United States, or Philadelphia Daily Advertiser, belongs to this class. No, no, that would be an insult, and prove my want of discernment. But should the public, after a full investigation of this alarmist business, be pretty unanimously of opinion, that it has been very "*fatuitously*" managed, and, as a certain very ancient and industrious personage, nicknamed Belzebub, is reported to have declared, when he caught a hog, and sheared him, that there has been "*great cry and little wool*," am I to blame, Mr. Fenno? Surely not.

This is rather digressive. Let me resume the thread of my discourse. The Gazette of the United States escaped my observation on Tuesday evening. A neighbour had borrowed, and neglected to return it. On Wednesday, about dinner time, I was informed, that there was in it, a list of United Irishmen, and that among them my name was introduced. I sent for the paper; and the reader may readily conceive my astonishment at the "*fatuitous*" denouement of a plot, which had threatened the existence of the government, nay the very independence of the United States. It appeared that on the 26th of November, Mr. Fenno had had "*a list*" of the conspirators—that he had since that time repeatedly and with a loud voice called for further communications—and lo! after three weeks corrections, additions, and emendations, the promised list made its appearance, on the 18th of December, when there were brought forward, only

Four Teachers,
Three Tavern-Keepers,
Two Printers,
Three Writers,
A Doctor,
A Member of Congress,
A Shoe-seller, and
Two Taylors.

Fire and fury, thought I, what a bloody-minded set of despera-
does

does these must be ! every man of them at least a Guy Faux ! The cellars under Congress Hall, if any there be, ought to be carefully examined, lest they be filled with combustible matters—perhaps, as Bob Acres judiciously expresses it, with “ *double barreled swords and cut-and-thrust pistols.*”

To be serious ; other considerations soon arose in my mind. I found myself held up to the world as “ *a Guy Faux,*” a conspirator, “ ripe for rapine and spoil,” by a young man to whom I never had given any cause of offence, and with whom I had had a long, though far from an intimate acquaintance. If at such a moment, I felt disposed to bestow some harsh epithets on him who had acted so very unkindly towards me, I believe much censure would not attach to me. It would require a greater degree of patience than has fallen to the share of the “ *sputtering, fatuous Bookseller*” not to vent his indignation in pretty expressive terms.

To a man ambitious of being brought forward into public notice—of being conspicuous, the situation in which I was placed, might not be disagreeable. But I was no Erostratus. The humble, sequestered vale suited me better. I therefore resolved to wait upon Mr. Fenno, to investigate the affair, and called upon a much-respected friend to accompany me, and be witness of what might occur.

Mr. F. was at home. I told him how surprized and mortified I had been, to find my name introduced into his paper the preceding evening so very indecently and unjustly. He replied, he was not certain that my name was there. It is not necessary for me to express what I felt at this subterfuge, which must have reference to the quaint and new-found designation of “ *Mathew Ditto,*” which certainly was not Mathew Carey, although intended to convey and actually conveying those names to the reader. This quibble was not easily reconciled to the gratuitous and unasked proffer of the neck to the murderers’ knives, on the 26th of November. It is not my business to render them consistent.

When I had scouted this idea, Mr. Fenno informed me he had acted in the affair merely as Editor, and, in the performance of his duty as such, “ he could not answer whom *he might fall foul of.*” I replied he ought surely to be very careful whom he *fell foul of,* in violation of truth and justice ; that in the present instance, there was an equal disregard of both ; that I was no proper game for a newspaper, being a private citizen, and wholly abstracted from politics ; that should I ever become a suitable object of the scrutiny of newspaper Editors, I would not have any objection to be brought forward, being able and willing to defend

defend myself ; and in fine, after a *lengthy* conversation (excuse me, Mr. Cobbett, for the use of this word) I told him that his informant, whoever he might be, was a liar and a scoundrel ; and that if these terms required any explanation, it might be sought for and had at No. 118, Market Street.

I next day waited on Mr. Fenno with the following lines, which were published in his paper of Thursday the 20th of December :

Mr. Fenno,

" IN your paper of yesterday, after a column of virulent abuse against United Irishmen, you have introduced my name among those of sundry persons, who, your readers are given to understand, are members of that association ; and thus, with equal decency, truth, and justice, you make me a participator of the abuse you so freely bestow. I am willing, Sir, to take your word, that you were not the compiler of the list, and that in the insertion of it, you acted merely as Editor, without pretending to vouch for its authenticity. But, Sir, let me ask you, how can you reconcile to your duty, as publisher of a paper, to attack the character, attempt to injure the interest, and disturb the peace of a fellow-citizen, without fully and satisfactorily ascertaining the truth of the allegations you bring forward ? From the very keen sensibility you formerly displayed, respecting some strictures upon your father, I should have expected more tenderness for the feelings of others, than you have exercised on this occasion.

" To close this lengthy exordium, I now declare unequivocally, that whoever informed you I am a Member of the Society of United Irishmen, is a liar, undeserving of confidence. If I do not apply any harsher epithets, it is not because the writer does not richly deserve them—but because I think a decent regard for the public should forbid the use in a newspaper of such terms as his conduct merits. If the epithet I use, is too hard of digestion, he knows where to apply for a remedy. I never in the whole course of my life attended a meeting of United Irishmen but once, and that was about eighteen months ago.

" MATHEW CAREY."

December 19.

I might here dismiss the subject, so far as respects the Gazette of the United States. But two facts, connected with it, force themselves so strongly on my mind, that I think it would be extremely unjust and improper to omit them.

The first is, that the observations immediately preceding the list, are delivered in the first person singular, the stile generally adopted by newspaper Editors, when they deliver their own oracular decisions. " I requested Communications"—" Those I have

have received"—" Why should I publish a dozen of names ?"—
 " I say, why should I insert in MY paper ?" Even the very
 slender covering of "*a Correspondent observes*"—in Italic—or
 " COMMUNICATION," in capitals—used by printers, when
 they choose to shift the responsibility off their own shoulders, was
 not in this instance deemed necessary.

The other fact is, that two of the parties accused, John
 Black and Samuel Park, having in the Gazette of the United
 States, of the 25th of December, published a contradiction of
 the charge of being United Irishmen, the former in a well writ-
 ten address, and the latter under solemn affidavit, Mr. Fenno
 subjoined to their publication the following lines, which he prob-
 ably considered as a complete refutation of all they had advan-
 ced :

" I hurl back in the teeth of these fellows every item of their
 " abuse. *I have called neither of them an United Irishman.* If I
 " had, nothing they can say or do, would alter my opinions, re-
 " specting them, their principles, or their purposes."

I shall not ask here—how can the stile of the introductory pa-
 ragraphs be reconciled to the idea of mere editorship?—nor, if
 Mr. Fenno *did not* charge those people with being United
 Irishmen, what charge *did* he bring against them, or for what
 conceivable purpose did he introduce their names into his pa-
 per?—These and many other questions might be asked, and co-
 pious comments added. But I trust I shall have very few read-
 ers who will not admit, that the facts themselves scorn the sup-
 port of comment, illustration, or argument.

I sent Mr. Fenno a billet, insisting on a disavowal of the
 charge against me. To this he had not the decency to reply.
 Perhaps he did not know, or at least consider at the moment,
 that few things can reflect more honour on a gentleman, than
 apology for injury, or retraction of error. Irritated by his si-
 lence and neglect, I was disposed to make application to a lawyer,
 and sue him for damages. But disliking the trouble attendant on
 it, and considering that one affair of the kind at a time, was
 enough on my hands, I abandoned the idea.

The reader who has honoured me with his attention thus far,
 must have perceived, that I treat Mr. Fenno in a very different
 stile from Cobbett. The reasons are, obvious. The former has
 but once attempted to injure me—and the attempt, though a
 very flagrant one, might have arisen from misinformation. He
 is moreover young and inexperienced. At his age, it is na-
 tural and somewhat excusable to carry more fail than ballast—
 to be more under the dominion of imagination, zeal, and enthu-
 siasm, than that of prudence and caution. The latter are gene-
 rally

rally the fruits of age and experience. Circumstances, indeed, often accelerate their growth, previous to the customary period of maturity. And the present affair, trivial as it is, may afford Mr. Fenno, an useful lesson, which is not to be despised, that an overweening zeal, when not duly tempered by prudence, may sometimes lead him into unpleasant situations, from which it may be very difficult to escape, without making a very "*fatuitous*" figure in the eyes of observers. He might have gone on for months with virulent and declamatory paragraphs against United Irishmen, their "Golgothas," their "massacres," their "carnage, plunder, ravage, and throat-cuttings," till he had rendered them so horrible, as to answer the same very useful purpose for American nurses, that the dreadful Malbrouk did for those useful ladies in France. But after so many weeks of "*dreadful note*," to bring forward a list of *seventeen persons*, and persons too in such humble walks of life, was worse than even Edmund Burke's sublime dagger scene in the House of Commons. This ludicrous list, among its other inconveniences, has furnished him with the comforts of a snug suit for damages, commenced by one of the parties, who, by the way, I am informed, is strongly antigallican in his politics, and as much opposed as Mr. Fenno, to United Irishmen.

But with Cobbett—with the infamous—with the abandoned Cobbett, who has been teizing me occasionally since the 5th of May 1797, and whom I have borne with a degree of patience that must astonish the reader, as it does myself at present, what measures could I be expected to observe? Where find terms of reproach, of opprobrium, adequate to his turpitude, but by ransacking his own abominable works? Never, reader, never, should I have been able to collect the terms of vituperation I have used, had I not engaged in a review of the publications of that black-guard.

CHAP. V.

Republication by Cobbett of the list from the Gazette of the United States, with Comments. A very mild and complimentary letter from M. Carey. Cobbett puzzled. No answer. Parody.

THE opportunity afforded by the publication in the Gazette of the United States, was too favourable to be neglected by the miscreant Cobbett. Accordingly, on Friday the 21st of December,

ember, he republished the list and my letter to Mr. Fenno, to which he prefixed the following comments :

“ UNITED IRISHMEN.

“ Amongst all the various dangers, which this country has to apprehend, the combination of a set of men, who denominate themselves *United Irishmen*, is the most serious. Their organization is so complete and so extensive, and their objects are so directly of a rebellious nature, that every power of government, and every exertion of individuals, should be made use of to defeat their projects.

“ Mr. Fenno has been very industrious in getting information on the subject. He has published a list of names, *not, indeed, as the names of United Irishmen*, but as disaffected Irishmen—Irishmen disaffected to the government of the United States.

“ I applaud Mr. Fenno’s generous zeal in the cause of his country ; but when he published his list, I looked upon it as *premature*, for certain reasons which no one could know but myself. I therefore did not copy his list into my paper ; but, since *threats* have been thrown out against him, and since he has been actually *assaulted*, for this publication, I am determined to show the Democratic crew, that there is at least one man besides Mr. Fenno, who dares openly to espouse the cause of a good government, in spite of all the hell of Jacobinism.

“ This list, trifling as it is, and though it does not charge any man with being an *United Irishman*, [what a lying villain !] threw the whole camp into confusion and uproar. The *Careys* have come forward with a denial, as will be seen by the following letters,* which I also take from Mr. Fenno’s paper.

“ Thus

* James Carey published in the Gazette of the United States, on the 20th of December, the following letter:—

Mr. FENNO,

Being last night informed that you had mentioned my name in your paper of Tuesday as a member of the society of United Irishmen, I am to request you will give equal publicity to my refutation of a charge which is at once false and malicious.

I solemnly declare that I never was a member of the society of United Irishmen, either in Ireland or this country ; neither was I ever present at any of their meetings, nor even proposed as a member, to my knowledge. I think it necessary, however, to mention that I do not make this declaration to remove any supposed odium which may be thought to attach to the members of that society ; for I believe the motives and views of that association to be equally laudable
and

"Thus we see that one brother acknowledges *having been an United Irishman*, and that the other thinks the *motives and views* of the association to be *laudable and virtuous*. This is a very pretty way of convincing the public, that *Mr. Fenno's information is false* ! It is an *Irish* way of doing it. It is well known (from the constitution of this society) that its objects are, to aid the rebels in Ireland, or (which is most probable) to aid the French, if occasion should serve, against the government of the United States ; Each of these objects is equally hostile to the United States ; and yet the Careys have the impudence to say that Mr. Fenno's information is false, when he classes them amongst the *disaffected Irish* ! !

"*Matthew Ditto*" (I have laughed at this a hundred times) Mathew Ditto says that he only *attended* a society of United Irishmen. By a perusal of their *test* and rules, it will appear, that he could not *attend* without being a member ; and it will also appear, from the same perusal, that he could not cease to be a member, without breaking the shocking oath of secrecy. The ceremonies of the compact are essentially the same as those of freemasonry. The horrid oath must be broken, or the initiated still remains a United Irishman.

"I have little inclination to *criticise* on a production of Mathew Carey's ; but, methinks, that an *author* should know how to distinguish the parts of speech to which his words belong. Mathew first calls the word *liar* an *epithet*, and in the next member of the sentence he calls it a *term*. Yet this man *has been a vamped of geographies* and a grinder of "*Trifles in Prose*." These poor trifles were the most unfortunate in the world ; for, though the finest attempt at the prosaic bathos that I recollect to have seen, I do not believe that ten copies of them were ever sold. (*The scrubby rascal tells a falsehood. The whole edition is sold except about ten copies.*) The diminutive volume, like a premature chicken, perished with the shell on its head.

"But

and virtuous—so much so, that I should not be deterred from becoming a member, nor from continuing if I had been one, by all the torrents of abuse with which they have lately been honored. My principal view is to shew the public how false your information is with respect to that society, even in what occurs almost under your very nose ; it is therefore reasonable to conclude that your statements of the objects and proceedings of remote branches of that association must, at least, be equally erroneous—much more, it appears, they could not be.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

JAMES CAREY.

"But, if Mathew Ditto is destitute of talents, he makes it up in spitefulness. What brags must a man have, to talk about *the peace of his family being disturbed*, by his being stiled a *disaffected Irishman*, when, in the same paragraph, he aims a blow at a whole family of orphans, by alluding to what every one knows to be a base and wicked accusation against their virtuous father! But the impudence of a Democrat is to be measured by his malignity.

"By the conclusion of Mathew's letter, he is, it seems, as usual, *full of fight*. As it appears to be his intention to challenge, Mr. Fenno will have a right to choose weapons: and, if I were Fenno, I would fight him with a *pen*. Then we shall all enjoy the combat. As to any *personal* conflict between them, I hope that on the part of Fenno, it will always be carried on by *the point of the scie.*"

On a perusal of his paper, I determined, again to renew my correspondence with him, but in a stile extremely different indeed from what I had before used. He had complained that my letters were inspid. I resolved whatever epithet he might bestow upon this, that it should not deserve that of "*inspid.*" Accordingly, I gave full expression to the abomination and abhorrence I felt for him, in a letter of which the following are the parts relative to himself, and which I sent him on Sunday, the 23d December.

WILLIAM CORBETT,

"*The villain's censure is extorted praise.*"

I might feel proud of the honour of being abused in the most infamous, blackguard newspaper, that ever disgraced a civilized country, and by a nefarious wretch, who combines in his detestable and detested person, qualities heretofore believed by natural and moral philosophers to be utterly incompatible—who is eternally canting and whining about religion, and yet rarely opens his mouth without cursing, swearing and blasphemy—who talks and writes more fiercely than any Drawcanfir—and yet in cowardice defies comparison with the most abject wretch that ever dramatist introduced upon the stage, for the scorn and contempt of a wondering audience—whose courage has never been displayed but by the flagellation of the unfortunate woman whose evil destiny connected her with such a monster—who makes professions of truth and candour that would lead the ignorant to regard him as a model of veracity—and yet has never scrupled to advance the most atrocious and villanous lies, to answer his black and detestable purposes—who professes a vestal regard for decency and decorum—and yet cannot refrain from insulting

blinding the eye and depraving the taste of his readers with the coarsest obscenity, in all its naked deformity—who never ceases to rail at the murderous deeds of a Carrere and a Robespierre—and is yet a more murderous villain* than either, panting after rapine, slaughter, civil war and all their attendant horrors—whose adamantine, or worse than adamantine, heart, neither age, sex, rank, piety, calamity, nor even death itself, has ever been known to soften or to mollify—in witness whereof, out of thousands of instances that might be produced, I need only refer to your cowardly and Billingsgate attacks upon mrs. Bache, a helpless widow, with four children—on Swanwick, bending to the grave, under the weight of unmerited distresses—on Warner Mifflin, whose exemplary humanity has acquired him the plaudits of all who knew him, but you—on general Marshall, a distinguished citizen of the very party whom you insidiously pretend to espouse—on Thomas Muir, maimed so as to excite the pity of Herod himself, were Herod still living—and, to conclude, on the venerable Franklin, the pride, the honour, the glory of his country, whom death itself could not shelter from your infernal rage.

“But, wretch as you are, accursed by God, and hated by man, the most tremendous scourge that hell ever vomited forth to curse a people, by sowing discord among them, I desire not the honour or credit of being abused or vilified by you. I have not leisure to attend to a controversy, unless I am driven to recommence the trade of newspaper printing and make a profession of scribbling; this, if I cannot escape your coarse, low-lived abuse, I shall certainly and infallibly do—and then I will hold you up to the execration of mankind.

“But no; I will never disgrace my paper with your detested name. Callous and case-hardened, you draw subsistence from your infamy and notoriety. “His’d and hooted by the pointing crowd,” you care not, provided you can amass money enough to secure you a competence at the close of your dishonourable career. But your writings I shall so cut up, and strip of their sophistry, as to make even ‘Folly’s self to stare’ and wonder how she could possibly have been so long duped by you.

* * * * *

“To send a challenge to a blasted, posted, loathsome coward, who, a disgrace to the name of soldier, when he was called to account for his villany, hen-heartedly took refuge under the strong arm of the law, and swore his life against the challenger, would sink me almost to a level with yourself. But, detested miscreant, if ever you dare approach the throne of heaven, pour out

* Remember Mitchell.

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thanksgivings that I am so far inferior to you in bodily strength. Were I able to grapple with you single-handed, I swear by all my hopes of happiness, the inmost recesses of your dungeon-like labyrinths should not screen you from my vengeance! Heavens! what pride! what pleasure! I should feel in dragging you reeking from your den, and cow-skinning you till Argus himself should not be able to perceive a hair's breadth upon your carcase but sore upon fore; so that were you and Lazarus candidates for the commiseration of the public, you would carry off the palm.

"But, wretch, I desire no farther altercation with you. Victory over you would be dishonour. What, O heavens! must defeat be, were that possible? But of this I entertain no apprehension. I shall fight you with your own weapons of abuse and scurrility. I know that in point of the education fit for such a warfare, I have not had your advantages. But so far as a close imitation of the great original, Cobbett's Gazette, and a careful study of the blackguard's dictionary, can supply the want of experience, I promise you, the copy shall be admitted by all who are not very nice connoisseurs indeed, to be a very exact likeness. But I once more declare my unwillingness to be driven to extremities with you. What is past, I am willing to try to forget. But never dare to disgrace my name by introducing it into your filthy paper. If you do, you shall sorely repent it. You will too late regret the temerity that urged you to an engagement in which you have nothing to gain—but much to lose.

"I have laboured hard to avoid a contest with you. This is my final effort. If it proves in vain, on your detested head be the consequences."

December 22d, 1798.

MATHEW CAREY.

Part of the preceding letter is omitted. Some of it related to individuals, who are, by common fame, reported to be connected with Cobbett. Not having reduced to a certainty the information I received on the subject, I thought it would be unjust and cruel to bring them forward till the fact was ascertained.

This letter completely threw away the scabbard. It was not easy to foresee what course Cobbett would determine to steer. Two plans struck my mind, as likely to perplex him considerably which to pursue. One was, to publish the letter, and accompany it with a discharge of all the stink pots, and other fetid and noisome matter that he could collect.—And of his powerful talents in this line, the world has had many convincing proofs. The other was, sneakingly to pocket the letter, and remain silent. When I considered the infernal rage and violence of his temper, with his native stock of unblush-

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ing impudence, I was led to suspect the former. But on the other hand, the shocking meanness, baseness and cowardice, he had so frequently displayed, inclined me to look for the latter.

When I wrote this letter, I was nearly resolved, if ever he again introduced my name into his Gazette, to publish proposals directly for a paper, one main purpose of which should be to "hang up him and his associates on the tenterhooks of infamy," as a sort of *monstra horrenda, in terrorem* to other villains like him, if any such can be found. But after mature consideration, I felt a strong disinclination to recur to this step, *except as a dernier resort*. I thought it better to defer it as long as possible, determined it should be forced on me, like the present appeal. Whenever it happens, it will not be a matter of choice. But the later it comes, abandoned profligate Cobbett! the more signal will be its effects upon you. This is but a trifling specimen of what you are to receive.

The trouble and anxiety attendant on a paper are very considerable—its interference with my other business would produce very great inconvenience.—There is, moreover, a strong objection to a newspaper, as many newspapers are carried on in this country, which renders the editorship of one, a severe and painful task to a man of any liberality of mind.—In England, Ireland, and Scotland, the editors of newspapers, consider and treat each other, reciprocally as gentlemen.—Although the collision of political opinions there is at least equal to what prevails here, and although the printers and writers support the parties they espouse with the utmost ardour, still, like the gentlemen of the bar, they observe, generally speaking, the rules of decorum and decency towards their adversaries. The deviations from this rule are few, and entail dishonour on those who are guilty of them. In fact, the printers are seldom the subject of attack. Opinions, principles, and systems are opposed and defamed, or supported and defended; but, rarely, if ever, does it occur that the publishers of those opinions, principles, or systems, are vilified and abused. We fondly copy from England. Would to heaven, for sake of the national character, that this decent, this honourable, this gentlemanly custom was transplanted among us. Here, the black-guard's vocabulary is exhausted to collect terms of reproach to heap upon editors, printers, and publishers. And, "O shame! where is thy blush!" even when the editorship of a Gazette devolves, by the death of a husband, on a helpless widow, beings who call themselves men, and who feel proud of the privileges of the name, forgetful of that respect for the sex, which the untutored Indian in some degree feels, assail, with coarse

and obscene abuse, women, incapable of defence! On this subject I could bring forward facts, which would, if stated in their full deformity, crimson the cheeks and corrode the breasts of the guilty. But I shall let them pass for the present. A foreigner who reads our papers, must form an unfavourable opinion of the taste and even of the morals of a public, who permit, nay, who countenance such a disgraceful and atrocious practice.

To return to Cobbett. As I had presupposed, he was perplexed what to do. What a treat it would have been to see him raging and storming, cursing and swearing, and venting his fury on every person dependent on him, after the perusal of the letter! He did not, however, choose either of the plans I had anticipated. In his paper of Monday the 24th of December, he took no notice of my letter, and had not a line respecting me, except the following paragraph:

"No man will doubt that the objects of the combination [of the United Irishmen] are of the most wicked, and bloody nature; but if any one were inclined to doubt this, I think the fierceness with which the Careys came forward to repel what they consider as a charge of belonging to the society, must produce conviction in the minds of the most incredulous; for how seditious, how dangerous, how detestable must be the principles and views of a society, which a fellow of Mathew Carey's politics thinks it necessary to forswear."

This teizing kind of attack rendered it difficult for me to decide what ground to assume. I was unwilling to come forward with a suite of appeals, replies, &c. such as would probably follow any public notice of the ruffian. I therefore passed the preceding lines by in silence, as but a slight return for the copious dose sent him on Sunday.

On Saturday the 29th of December, he published the following very elegant, humorous, witty, profound and learned production:—

MAT. CAREY.

"Since this *personage* has rendered himself conspicuous, by his illiterate and insolent letter to *Mr. Fenno*, several gentlemen have asked me *who*, and *what* he is. To preclude the necessity of further questions of the kind, I give this general answer. That the man about ten or a dozen years ago, thought fit to leave Ireland, and to *emigrate* to America; that he used to sell books up Market Street; and that he acknowledges to have attended a *Society of United Irishmen* so

"late

"late as eighteen months ago. I know little else of him, except it be that he is a manufacturer of most miserable prose. Any thing that he can write is beneath even verbal criticism; but I cannot help hooting at his new-coined adjective, '*lengthy*,' made use of in his letter to Mr. Fenno. He may, with equal propriety, say *breadthy* and *depthy*. And yet this poor creature (like *Clitus*) sometimes quotes scraps of *Latin*."

Next day, in answer to the above, I sent him the following

" P A R O D Y.

" FOR PORCUPINE'S GAZETTE.

" WILL. COBBET.

" Since this viperous wretch has rendered himself conspicuous by biting the hand that fed him, and darting his poison at his benefactors, several gentlemen have asked me who and what he is. To preclude the necessity of further questions of this kind, I give this general answer—The caittiff, about four or five years ago, thought fit to leave England and to migrate to America. He used to keep a low school in Wilmington—and in some cases officiated as negro driver and catchpole to some French people resident there. Since his removal to this city, he has rendered himself notoriously infamous by a degree of scurrility, abuse, malignity, falsehood, and obscenity, of which neither the American annals, nor even the records of Grubstreet, can produce any parallel. It was generally believed he had sunk to the lowest abyss of infamy; but, as his exalted friend, Edmund Burke, says, "*in the lowest hell there was still a lower, and in he leaped*:" for being some time since challenged for his blackguardism, he proved himself, in the face of America, A COWARD as well as A RASCAL; having recourse to a magistrate to secure him from the vengeance he had so richly earned.

" I know many more things of him, which shall be revealed in due season. For the present, I shall confine myself to hooting at his vain and daw-like pretensions to criticism, notwithstanding his works, as he pompously styles them, abound in gross grammatical errors, for which a school-boy would receive the ferula. To instance a few, " I have done all that *laid* in
my

my power." (1) "Far from approving of all *or of hardly any thing*," (2) "Why do I pursue *in* this odious comparison?" (3) "I was well wearied." (4) And to crown the whole, the sorry scribbler uses the [neuter [5] verb *learn* for the (*active*) verb *teach*. "He was a month *in learning me*." (6) "My father *learnt* us all to read." (7) "If one of the whiskey boys had *went* over to England." (8) And yet this poor creature pretends he learned Lowth's grammar by rote.

MATHEW CAREY.

December 30th, 1798.

CHAP. VI.

Curfory Observations, on the cause of Cobbel's Spite and Malice, Irishmen. National Prejudices. Liberality.

It has frequently struck me with surprise, wherefore has the villain Cobbett, manifested such an infuriate hatred against me. I have exerted myself to ascertain the motive, and believe I have at length discovered it. I am by birth an Irishman, And feeling the prejudices which the vulgar and low bred among his countrymen entertain for the people of other countries, he can never forgive me the sin of being a native of Ireland. That Englishmen of education are above this disgraceful prepossession, I am proud to acknowledge. But they must confess, and many of them have done so to me, that the canaille of their countrymen, such as Cobbett, are more under the influence of it, than the canaille of any other country whatever.

Yes, I am an Irishman by birth—although I am a citizen of the United States, by residence and by a full compliance with all the regulations and conditions devised for the purpose. The former title I deem as valuable as the latter. I see nothing in the history of my country to render me ashamed of her—

(1) Democratic Judge, page 19. (2) Idem, 90. (3) Idem, 100. (4) Life, 17. (5) In the hurry of writing, I introduced through mistake the word "*neuter*" before the "*verb learn*." This will afford the "*muddy-headed beast*," to borrow a phrase from himself, a glorious opportunity of displaying his talents at criticism. (6) Life, page 21. (7) Idem, page 15. (8) Idem, 38.

and

and I trust she shall never be ashamed of me. Ireland ! Ireland ! country eminently blest by nature with almost every advantage that heaven in its utmost kindness could bestow, of situation, rivers, bays, insularity, robustness of natives, fertility of soil, and mildness of climate, but, for centuries, cursed with the hardest fortune, when I forget or despise thee, when I cease to rejoice in your successes, and weep over your miseries,

- " Let me be branded for the public scorn,
- " Turn'd forth, and driven to wander like a beggar;
- " Be friendless and forsaken. Seek my bread
- " Upon the barren, wild, and desolate waste,
- " Feed on my sighs, and drink my falling tears."

Let vulgar, illiberal souls, whether they " strut in ermine or brocade"—or are "*stuck o'er with titles*," disgrace themselves by casting national reflections on the natives of Ireland. [Nothing can add to the meanness and baseness of such conduct, except its being, as it is sometimes, practised by children of Irishmen.] Let them, to answer their contracted purposes, forget or pretend to forget that honour, virtue, truth and honesty, are " of no country"—that " in every country, he that worketh " righteousness is accepted of God" and ought to be equally so of man—Let them mark their preferences and attachments, as well as their rejections and hatreds, by the " geographical distinctions of birth"—and with 'microscopic eye' trace the map to ascertain whether a man is upright or wicked.

- " Thus base-born minds. But as for me,
- " I can and will be free.
- " Like a strong mountain, or some stately tree,
- " My soul grows firm, upright,
- " And as I stand, and as I go,
- " It keeps my body so."

If Cobbett was not a base hind, the attachment an Irishman feels for his country, would excite his esteem. He is an Englishman. For England he feels, or affects to feel an enthusiastic affection. Why should he not suffer Irishmen to be actuated by the same motives ? Why shall a line of conduct, on which he so highly prides himself, be disreputable or dishonourable in another man ?

His sordid, wretched mind, incapable of appreciating the force of those liberal motives, pursues the Irish nation with infernal malice. Whenever he introduces them into his abominable paper, he seems to labour to invent new terms of reproach to appease his direful rage.

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There is one circumstance alone, which has made me almost ashamed of being an Irishman—That is, the tameness and pusillanimity with which so many of my countrymen have submitted to the abuse of the vagabond! How many of them are in this city, at least equally strong and powerful with this ruffian! Where is their resolution, where their courage, to allow him to pass with impunity! Could they perform a greater act of justice, or render a more acceptable service to their insulted country, than by promoting the circulation of his blood with a good dose of shillelah, administered with due vigour? A quarter of the spirit that many of them have displayed in their own country to procure satisfaction for some imaginary offence, would have been sufficient, to strike a damp into his inmost soul—and made

“ A deadly fear o’er all his vitals reign,
“ And his chill’d blood hang curdled in each vein.”

But there is one thing more infamous, if possible, than the patience with which the abuse of the scoundrel is borne. That is, that there are Irishmen degenerate enough to be found among the subscribers of a blackguard ruffian, whose chief study seems to be, to heap abuse and infamy on their country.

CHAP. VII.

Petite guerre on the part of Cobbett—A very valuable hint to increase the revenue arising from the post-office.

It is obvious, that the intercourse between Cobbett and me, as stated in Chap. V. appeared in the eyes of the world to give him the advantage. It is true, I was pouring red-hot balls into his works, which were rapidly demolishing them, and that in return he only kept up a small fire of musketry, of little importance. But there was this difference in his favour—my cannonade was unperceived by the public—while his was daily spread abroad in his “*dirty disb-clout*.” Affairs could not long remain in this situation. My patience, so often tried, was nearly exhausted. I had made sacrifices enough for sake of quiet. I felt humbled to submit so long to a wretch—the vilest of the vile. The cup of my indignation and resentment was brimful. A single drop would make it overflow. Still it required further provocation to overcome the extreme reluctance I felt to trespass on the public.

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The miscreant, measuring me by himself, mistook my motives. He thought, after what I had borne, that he might continue his *petite guerre* with impunity. This would lead any person to whom I might shew the letters I sent him, to suppose he had gained the victory.

In his paper of Saturday the 5th of January, he published the following paragraph, which, though not so atrocious as some he had previously printed, was the over-flowing drop.—

“The Sans-culottes, in general, are most mortally grieved at the news lately come to hand. But, what must be the shame, the confusion, the infernal torments, of the *Sans-culotte Irish*! I would not exchange situations with such a man as *Reynolds* or *Clytus Carey* for only one hour, for all the riches of the world; for I am sure I should become my own executioner before half the hour were out.”

The latter part of this paragraph demands a few observations. It proves, if any further proof were necessary, that Cobbett is either a liar or a hypocrite, or both. His papers almost daily abound with the most pious and solemn professions of his veneration for Christianity. To read some of these pharisaical effusions, any person, who did not know what a villain he was, would be tempted to think him a saint, preserved in existence to reclaim a sinful world from its wicked ways. But in what part of the Bible, or in what part of the conduct of Jesus Christ, does he find any countenance for the horrid crime of suicide—self-murder?—“*I should become my own executioner before half the hour were out.*” Unfortunately, there is no such happiness in store for mankind. It is not to be hoped or expected that he will spare the hangman an office, which he has owed him these four years. The craven coward would not have nerve enough to perform this act of justice, the only reparation he can make for his manifold crimes.

The term “*Clytus Carey*,” may require a little explanation. Cobbett, in the effervescence of his insolence and impudence, had attempted to cover with his slime Mr. Hopkinson, a lawyer, whose politics are highly federal. This attack, with that on General Marshall, and other federalists, irritated several gentlemen, who had been his patrons, and been highly satisfied, while he vented his abuse on their political enemies alone. But as soon as he began to vilify their friends, they shrewdly found out, what had appeared obvious enough long before, that he was a scoundrel. Accordingly a writer in the *Philadelphia Gazette*, under the signature of *Clytus*, bombarded the poor devil so completely as to make him repent his temerity. Here he proved himself as complete a rascal as he had ever done before. A friend

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stepped in to defend him, and was in consequence severely handled by Clytus. Cobbett, like a sneaking, paltry fellow, abandoned him to Clytus, and never dared reply, either to defend that friend or himself.

Mark the artifice of the villain. To disarm the writings of "Clytus" of their force with federalists, he insinuates that they were written by me, an avowed enemy of his politics! Poor, miserable subterfuge, worthy of such a poor miserable scoundrel! On Mr. Brown, printer of the Philadelphia Gazette, I call to testify that I never wrote a line or word of Clytus.

As many persons have in vain ordered Cobbett to discontinue the papers he sends them, I take this opportunity to furnish them gratis with an infallible receipt to oblige him to keep his "dish-clout" at home, and to increase the post office revenues. Let them fold up his papers carefully, put them under cover of a large and heavy sheet of writing paper, direct them to William Cobbett, Philadelphia, and put them into the post-office. They will be decently brought back to him as letters—and cost him a quarter dollar, half a dollar, or three quarters each, according to the distance. He will then rescue them from the disgrace of receiving the paper, in order to save the expence of postage. *Probatum est.*

CHAP. VIII.

Cobbett's literary frauds. Beauties of Porcupine. Conclusion.

That Cobbett is an unprincipled villain, is too well known to require any illustration or enforcement. But how gross and infamous are his misrepresentations, few people know, as very few readers of newspapers take the trouble of comparing quotations and extracts with the originals whence they are pretended to be drawn. But the following instance will satisfy every man, how superlative a scoundrel he is.

In the Commercial Advertiser, published by Mr. Noah Webster, of New-York, there appeared on the 8th of July 1798, a "lengthy" paragraph, which Cobbett republished on the 11th of the same month.* Part of it follows:

"It would seem as if *England* and *France* could never forgive us, for being an independent and a happy people; and as

* See Porcupine's Gazette, No. 419, page 3, column 1.

"we may presume that Providence is on our side, we defy all
 "their impotent and impious attempts to check his views, to
 "lead us kindly by the hand to a state of inevitable prosperity
 "and happiness as yet unknown on earth. Previous to our re-
 "volution, *the British insulted us* by emptying all their condemned
 "convicts on our shores—We supplicated in vain to prevent it;
 "but mark the finger of Heaven—*most of these very men entered*
 "*into the American army and the greater part of them perished*
 "*fighting valiantly for the liberty of America.*"

Two days afterwards, the 13th of that month,† Cobbett vom-
 ited forth against Mr. Webster, a torrent of the foulest abuse;
 and, unparalleled effrontery! in quoting his words, he states
 them as follows:

"Noah Webster insists that the heroes who fell in defence of
 "American freedom, were, in great part, composed of the con-
 "victs whom Great-Britain emptied on these shores."

Reader, to whatever party or country you belong, whether
 you are Englishman or Irishman, Scotchman or Dutchman, fede-
 rist or antifederalist, aristocrat or democrat, if you are an honest
 man, lay your hand on your heart, and pronounce sentence on
 this fraud. Mark well the difference between the idea convey-
 ed by Mr. Webster and that forced on him by his vile commen-
 tator. The former is correct. Many men, convicted in Eng-
 land of slight offences, and transported to this country, have re-
 formed their lives, (and, great a rascal as Cobbett is, even he may
 reform) and become useful and exemplary citizens. Some of
 the first officers in this country, when its purity of morals and
 manners was equal to that of any country under the canopy of
 heaven, have been filled by such men. Of this no man, but an
 ignoramus, can pretend to doubt. And the statement of the fact
 could give no offence to any rational American.

But Cobbett's infamous position, "that the heroes who fell
 "in defence of American freedom, were in great part composed
 "of the convicts whom Great Britain emptied on these shores,"
 is a most monstrous and abominable falsehood; and had Mr. Web-
 ster or any other man, made such a declaration, he would have
 merited to be sent out of New-York, as I hope to see Cobbett
 sent out of Philadelphia, with disgrace and dishonour.

I have not done with this infamous business. Cobbett's "dis-
 clout" is the sole vehicle to convey intelligence to many parts of
 the union. On his pages hundreds of citizens depend solely for
 information. What precious information it must be, passing
 through such a foul, corrupted channel, and from such a rascally
 source! Will any man be "*fatuitous*" and mad enough to de-
 pend

† See Porcupine's Gazette, No. 421, page 2, column 3.

pend upon the foreign intelligence of a villain who misquotes, *in two days*, articles republished *in his own paper*! In fact, there is no correct news to be had from Porcupine's Gazette. The quantity of domestic lies and scurrility he publishes, leaves little room for foreign information. What he does introduce, is always so garbled, and so intermingled with his own disgusting comments, that without the assistance of some other paper, no man can conceive a correct idea of the real state of affairs.

Some months since, a vessel arrived at Norfolk, which brought recent intelligence from Europe. The Norfolk printers published a supplement of near a column in length, which was brought to this city on Sunday morning. Cobbett received a copy of it. Short as it was, the whole did not suit his views. He omitted about a third—that is to say, all that he wished not to be true. Mr. Bradford likewise received a copy, and published it complete. The fraud was discovered—and the villain stood confessed.

Now, reader, I do not pretend that two news-printers are to be expected to make the same selection from the same file of papers. By no means. The extreme diversity of talents, views, and wishes, will inevitably lead them to vary their entertainment. While such a wretch as Cobbett, fills his columns, with unmeaning chit-chat from the London papers, and other matter, equally uninteresting to his readers, an intelligent, enlightened editor will select those important articles calculated to inform the public of the state of affairs, at this momentous crisis. For selections so trivial as I have stated, I blame not Cobbett. That he is unqualified for the weighty, important, and very influential office of editor of a gazette, in his misfortune and that of the public—but is no crime. But I assert confidently, that no man but an arrant rascal, who ought to be branded, and expelled from the commonwealth of letters, would be guilty of the misquotation I have stated of Mr. Webster's words, and of the suppression of part of the Norfolk news. The rascality of the former transaction can only be equalled by its impudence and contempt of the public, whom the blackguard must have supposed incapable of detecting his imposture.

In his genteel and sublime attack upon Dr. Priestly, he very *wittily* observes that after the riot at Birmingham, "when all the bustle was over, and every body thought the perverse fellow was going to take to his church, and get his living in an honest way, what did he do but set to work, *bottling up his own facts, and selling them for superfine inflammable air.*" Page 87.

Reader, what elegance! what wit! what humour! surely Sterne must in future "hide his diminished head," and give place
to

to this "*Corporal-turned-printer.*" What a number of excellencies crowded into five lines! What beauties of style! Unquestionably the next editor of Blair's Lectures will extract this *Morceau*, as a specimen of true attic salt! "the bustle was over!" "perverse fellow!" "take to his church!" "get his living in an honest way!" what did he do!" But, above all things, the grand idea of "*bottling up f—s*" demands particular attention. None but such a genius as Cobbet could have conceived it.—In a manufactory of "*f—s*" converted into "inflammable air" for the valuable purpose of elevating balloons, Cobbet's talents would be well employed. As he is fond of distinction, it might not be amiss to stile him "*f—t bottler*" in ordinary and extraordinary to his Satannic majesty.

Is it any wonder that talents capable of producing such *chef d'œuvres* as this, should have acquired the possessor so very extraordinary a degree of celebrity! That his works should have so long furnished entertainment for the grave and the gais— for the young and the old—for the poor and rich—for the clergy and laity—and even for ladies? It reflects no small credit on the discernment of the public, to have so judiciously proportioned patronage to merit!

"Is it any thing to us, whether he prefer Charley to George, or George to Charley, any more than whether he used to eat his burgoo with his fingers, or with a horn spoon?—What are his debts and his miseries to us? Just as if we cared whether his posteriors were covered with a pair of breeches, or a kelt, or whether he was literally a *sans-culotte*!" Bone, page 96.

"The worms *will stuff away* upon the work, while the *author's belly is empty.*" Idem, 100.

"I have set my foot amongst a nest of vipers; but *the poor devils* do not know how to sting. Let them writhe and hiss." Idem, 109.

"After having strutted so long in furbelowed brocades, and Whitechapel diamonds, they felt themselves by no means disposed to go slinking about the scene in an *a—clout.*"

"To bring it out after such a tit-bit as this, was as bad as serving up a *mess of burgoo* after a cranberry tart." Idem 109.

"The worshippers were called *cus-nus*. This, in the vulgar tongue, means bare a--es." Idem 133.

"Tom

—"Tom the Devil—had an amazing effect upon the loons
"below, who were all watching to catch, not the oracular,
"but the anarchical belches." Idem, 145.

"The preface to this *greasy dab* was a sharpening sauce, well
"calculated to make it go down." Idem, 148.

"I would advise the author never to read this paper in the
"stable. *The horses would certainly kick his brains out.*" Ibid.

"Were they informed that they can have as much ho-
"mony or fat pork as they can *gobble down*"—idem 153.

✱ "For my part, the English are no favourites of mine"
—"Eh, Mr. Corporal Cobbett, the English no favourites of
yours?—Do you pretend this is your writing? Can your im-
pudence go thus far? Is not this Mr. Mania's production?"
"I care very little if their Island were swallowed up by an
"earthquake, as the author of the Political Progress says;
"but truth is truth:—and let the devil deny, if he can, that
"this is the truth."

Reader, I have turned four commas at the beginning of each
line of the above paragraph, in order to prove to you that it
is an extract from the works of William Cobbett, ex-corporal
in his Britannic majesty's service. It is none of my manu-
facture; it is to be found in the first volume of the works of
that learned gentleman, bearing the following lines in the title
page—

PHILADELPHIA,

Printed by WILLIAM YOUNG, for

WILLIAM COBBETT OPPOSITE CHRIST'S CHURCH,

—1797.—

This title page, take notice, is at page 89 of the volume
—and the extract, above emphatically marked with four com-
mas, about the English—and their island—truth—and the devil
—and all the rest of it, is to be found in page 155—which,
being interpreted, means, in the vulgar tongue, one hundred
and fifty-five.

The following quotations are unfit for female eyes to see, or
female ears to hear. I therefore print them in hieroglyphics,
which the ladies, if any deign to read these pages, cannot, I
hope, decypher.

"ehcaB

ebcaB geP fo egdew -gniretne cht erofeb, -og eht rsiroC, inqua
eht ,etaf ni ,si eloopyalC eltneg ehT “* Porcupine’s Gazette
No. 529, page 3, column 3.

”meht nihtiw seviecer ehs hcihw taht tub ,namow eht htelifed
taht spil eht fo-tuo htemoc hcihw taht ton si ti ,noinipo ym
nI “ Porcupine’s Gazette, No. 441, page 3, column 3.

A person brought forward on oath a heinous charge against
Cobbett, who refuted the whole by the following logical proof of
his innocence: “The vagabond, at this moment, looks like a
“carcass newly dropped from the gallows. He is ragged, dir-
“ty, lousy-looking, and stinking. He is a walking dunghill;
“a nasty compound of all hues” in his person; and, in his
“character, he is a rebel, a sponge-paying debtor, and a scape-
“gallows.

“I will not debase myself by opposing my *bare word* to the
“oath of such a villain as this is. To say who and what he is,
“and who are his connexions, is enough. Those who want
“more from me, are informed that I despise their opinions.”

* * * * *

I have just learned, as this last half sheet is going to press,
that Cobbett threatens to assault me in the streets, for the libel
which, he says, I am about to publish, and of which some of
his spies have gained information, by pimping in the printing
office employed on the work. So then! the villain who has
for years blackguarded whom he pleased, and when remonstrated
with, insisted on his right to exercise the liberty of the press,
winces at the *lex talionis*—and wishes to debar *me* of what he
calls the liberty of the press. Very good, master Cobbett, very
good! So you can feel, as well as your neighbours! This is
charming. You shall, like *Perillus*, try the tortures you
have so long impudently and wickedly inflicted. It has been
amusement to you, to *rascal and scoundrel* every body whom you
disliked—but you do not find it very amusing to be *rascalled and*
scoundreled in turn. You must, as the blackguards, your associates,
say, *grin and bear it*. Do not, however, get into a passion too
soon. Wait a little, till you and your scoundrelly prompter see
what a rod is in foke for you both. Then be angry as soon as
you please.

Cowards and rascals are dangerous enemies. I would, *there-
fore*, rather have a contest of any sort whatever, with ten gen-
tlemen, than with one Cobbett. But should he assume courage
enough to attempt to put his threats into execution, I shall
be

*Il faut lire ces lignes de droit a gauche. Hæ lineæ legendæ
sunt retrorsum.

“ *ebcaB*

be prepared for the villain, and "by the beard of Pharaoh" I shall give him as warm a reception as in my power. Should there be, on the settlement of accounts, any balance in his favour, which I cannot myself pay, if I can for one hundred dollars procure as great a ruffian, scoundrel and blackguard as himself, [and though it will be difficult to find his equal, yet it is not impossible] to discharge the debt with a good smart hickory stick, may disgrace and infamy be my portion, if I do not cheerfully pay the sum, and risk the consequences. :

+ + + + +

An old rancorous wretch, Cobbett's pimp and pander, talks too of law-suits. If I am sued for any thing contained in this pamphlet, I shall make no other defence, than to lay before the judge and jury the provocations I have experienced. I shall not insult Philadelphia by supposing it possible to find in it a jury capable of granting a verdict for a libel in favour of this prince of libellers and slanderers.

Let this sanctified sinner beware. He knows that I am in his debt, and as able as willing to pay. He may purchase an exemption by crawling within his hole, and remaining in obscurity. But if he provokes me to drag him forward, "*like Cacus from his den*" [old gentleman, don't you remember this?] he may rest assured, that he will rival Porcupine in celebrity in a very short time.

+ + + + +

And now, reader, of whatever class, nation, or description you are—whatever political principles you profess—if you are a good and virtuous man, I solemnly call upon you—Friend of public taste, come forward, and discountenance a wretch whose paper has already depraved the taste of the public! Friend of social harmony, withdraw your patronage from an incendiary who uniformly labours to produce confusion! Friend of decency and decorum, frown upon a blackguard whose newspapers teem with lewd and obscene passages! Friend of the dignity of government, remove from it the foul reproach it labours under, of being dictated to by a vile, low-bred, illiterate alien! Friend of the religion of Jesus Christ—a religion that breathes "charity and good will to all men," hurl into his native insignificance, a fire-brand, who has increased all the old animosities of the country, and enkindled new and more violent ones—who is capable of exciting to arms, father against son, son against father, and brother against brother—who thirsts after blood and massacre!

THE END.

